

Our 20th year

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# Preserving the past, one piece at a time

By Ted Adams



Someone has finally done it and that someone is Bob Smythe. He has reproduced a model "D" Lindeman crawler.

Bob asked me if I thought it was possible to reproduce the first Lindeman crawler. I told him that I had quite a few photos of the crawler and I could scale them with the help of my computer.

I then reminded him that a friend of ours, Buck Charles, had said he would donate a burned out chassis of a "DI" toward the cause, to recreate a part of the past. Bob came up one day and we went to Ellensburg to see Buck; we left with the chassis and a few parts on the

back of Bob's truck.

Buck and I thought it would take Bob at least two years to do the job if it were possible.

Bob kept at it, calling for more dimensions and the answers to more questions. More parts were rounded up and the crawler started to take shape.

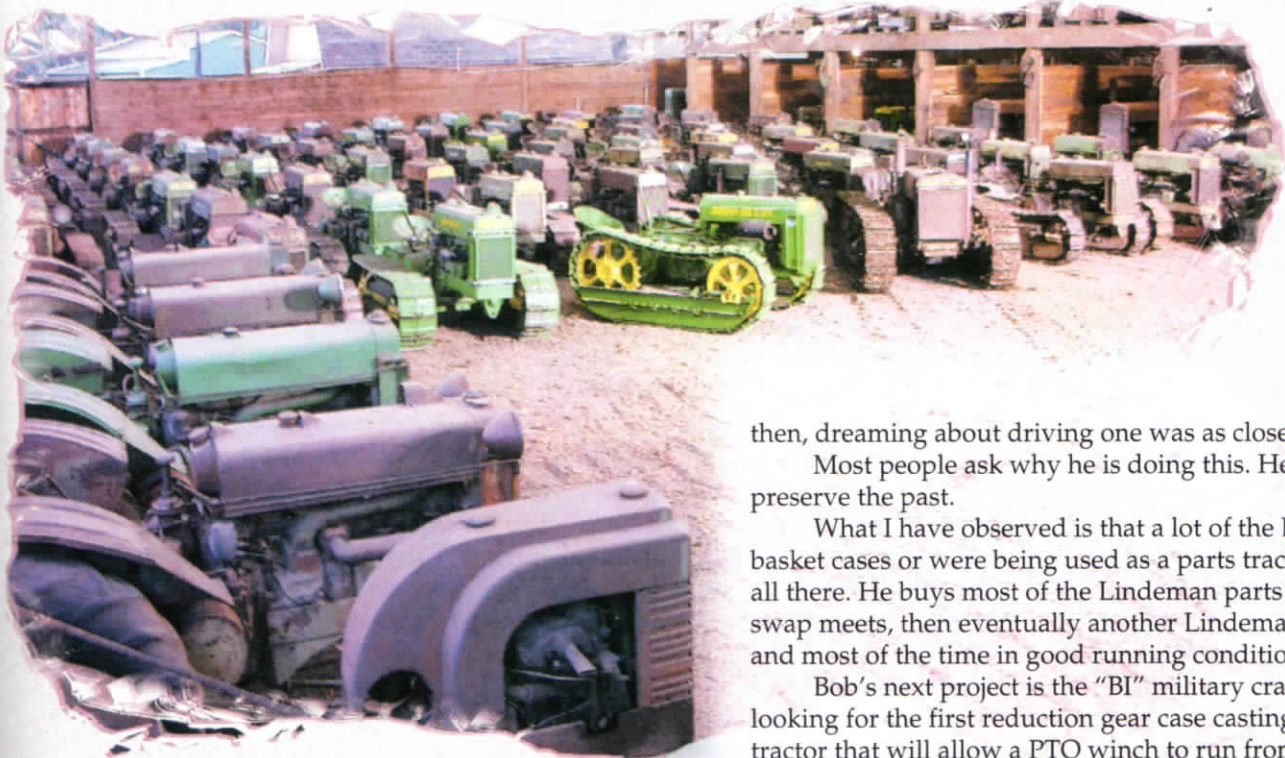
He would send me pictures of his progress and then came a picture of the completed crawler—not two years after Bob started, but only four months! It looked real close to the last "D" crawler Jesse built before changing to the "GPO" model. It was not quite the same, but Jesse would have been very pleased with what

Bob had done. Bob said he had test driven it quite a few times and was pleased with it.

Bob is an avid Lindeman collector with more than 60 "BO" Lindemans from very early flat backs to the more common type; one with fenders I had previously seen only in photographs. Along with the "BOs" is a "BR" Lindeman and a "GPO" Lindeman. And now he has a model "D" Lineman crawler.

In November, I was in Bob's area to see one of my grandchildren for her birthday, so I took the opportunity to stop and see him and his model "D" crawler. It looked better in person than in the photos and seemed to be close to Jesse's. Bob did an excellent job.

Then came the exciting part: Bob started it and told me to take a spin. Wow! What a thrill to drive it. It drove like a dream and up until



then, dreaming about driving one was as close as I could get.

Most people ask why he is doing this. He told me it is to preserve the past.

What I have observed is that a lot of the Lindemans were basket cases or were being used as a parts tractor and were not all there. He buys most of the Lindeman parts he can find at swap meets, then eventually another Lindeman is preserved and most of the time in good running condition.

Bob's next project is the "BI" military crawler. He is looking for the first reduction gear case casting from a "BI" tractor that will allow a PTO winch to run from it. If anyone knows where there is one, please contact: Bob Smythe, PO Box 20433, Portland, Oregon 97294-0433 or contact me at [LindemanArchives.com](http://LindemanArchives.com).